

August 28, 2014

Request for Proposals

The City of Fredericksburg will accept proposals for the services of an advertising agency to promote tourism to the Fredericksburg region for the Fredericksburg Regional Tourism Partnership.

The tourism advertising program in the Fredericksburg region is a cooperative program shared by the governments the City of Fredericksburg, and Counties of Spotsylvania and Stafford. The tourism cooperative seeks a three-year Letter of Agreement with a qualified firm to deliver services including creative development, media planning and placement, website development, search engine optimization, social media and public relations.

The City of Fredericksburg is the agency contact for the account. Billing for media and services for general consumer and group tour advertising is made to the City. The media budget for the regional cooperative budget ranges from \$150,000 to \$200,000 annually. Additional funds are expended on public relations and interactive media. The City of Fredericksburg allocates additional funding for discretionary tourism promotions.

The Fredericksburg Office of Economic Development and Tourism will award the contract by October 30, 2014. The advertising contract will be awarded for three years. The agency's performance will be reviewed each year and the contract may be terminated for unsatisfactory performance.

The Fredericksburg area is located in central Virginia on Interstate 95. It has a colorful colonial, Revolutionary and Civil War history, giving it an excellent heritage tourism base. The region is enhancing and expanding tourism offerings to complement heritage tourism.

There are historic attractions plus four major Civil War battlefields in the region. George Washington grew up in the Fredericksburg area, and many of the historic sites have a tie to his presence here, including Washington's boyhood home, a colonial living history tavern, a plantation home, Washington's mother's home, and a colonial apothecary shop. In addition, the attractions include an area history museum, the James Monroe Museum and Library, and Belmont, the historic home and art gallery of the 20th century artist Gari Melchers.

Sports marketing is an increasingly important contributor to the market's visitation. Strong segments have developed for arts and culture, special events and culinary tourism. Shopping is an attractor. Water sports on the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers and Lake Anna, a dinner theater, golf, and other activities broaden the tourism offerings. Additional, significant product development continues in the region with the potential to contribute significantly to visitation levels.

Meetings and conventions, bus tours and events are significant factors in the region's hospitality industry. Meetings space is diverse and the largest facility is a conference and expo center with 116,000 square feet. Government, military and association meetings, weddings and social events, shows and competitions are very active.

The successful advertising agency for the partnership presents the amenities to a broad audience of heritage, cultural, culinary, golf, recreational, group, meeting, reunion and other tourist segments utilizing a variety of media and techniques. The agency and the partnership will hold regular, frequent conferences (remote format is preferable) to update partners, review actions and activity, and adjust plans if necessary.

Proposals and materials will be accepted until 11 a.m. on Monday, September 29, 2014. It is the sole responsibility of the agency to insure that its proposal arrives on time. No proposals will be accepted after 11 a.m. on September 29, 2014.

Proposals should be sent to Karen Hedelt, Director of Economic Development and Tourism for the City of Fredericksburg, khedelt@fredericksburgva.gov or 706 Caroline St., Fredericksburg VA 22401, 540-372-1216.

After proposals are received, as many as four firms may be selected to make presentations to a selection committee. The selection committee will be comprised of representatives from each jurisdiction and industry partners. An agency will be chosen based on their credentials, presentation and materials shown in response to this request for proposals and supplemental materials if any are requested in advance of the presentations. New creative work is not required.

Information to Be Included in the Response

Name of agency Address Telephone and FAX Agency website address E-mail address of primary contact Please present the following points in order:

General agency information:

- When established.
- Number of employees, plus breakdown of staff by function (creative, client service, media, etcetera).
- Eite what services are provided by contractors to the agency.
- Who would be assigned to the Fredericksburg region's tourism account and their professional experience.
- Number of clients.
- Annual media billing for 2013, projected 2014.
- Average annual media billing per client, for 2013.
- Maximum and minimum annual media billing per client, for 2013.
- Size of largest and smallest clients.

Travel and hospitality industry experience:

- List of personnel and agency tourism and hospitality industry-related experience.
- List of major clients and tourism-related clients.
- Any clients who might pose a potential conflict with the Fredericksburg Area Tourism Partnership account.
- Why your agency is qualified for this account.
- Samples of no less than three examples of creative work developed by current staff for different clients.

Narrative:

Using a specific example, please describe how your agency has helped a current client achieve a specific goal. Limit your answer to 500 words, please.

Note: Please provide the proposals electronically. If any hardcopy supplemental materials are provided, please provide 10 copies of each item.

The City reserves the right to select the agency which best serves the interests of the City of Fredericksburg and its partners.